

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10
IO-13 OIC-02 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 EPG-02 AID-05 SS-15 STR-04
ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00
OMB-01 /139 W

-----077595 241806Z /46

R 241618Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5513
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, IRSG, EPAP
SUBJECT: RUBBER -- ANNUAL IRSG GROUP MEETING

1. THE INTERNATIONAL RUBBER STUDY GROUP (IRSG) JUNE 20-23 HELD ITS ANNUAL MEETING IN LONDON, ATTENDED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF ABOUT 30 COUNTRIES AND OBSERVERS FROM A NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING FAO, ANRPC. THE EEC AND UNCTAD. THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WERE
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DISCUSSED AND DECISIONS TAKEN:

2. UNCTAD RUBBER CONSULTATIONS.
THE RECENT UNCTAD RUBBER DISCUSSIONS IN GENEVA CAST A PERVASIVE INFLUENCE ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING, ALTHOUGH LITTLE NEW OF SUBSTANCE EMERGED DURING THE DELIBERATIONS. THE PRODUCERS IN THEIR STATEMENTS

FOCUSED ON THE PROGRESS MADE TOWARD THEIR GOAL OF A PRICE STABILIZATION SCHEME, WHILE THE CONSUMERS, ALTHOUGH NOTING WITH SATISFACTION THE POSITIVE RESULTS OF THE GENEVA MEETING, EMPHASIZED THAT MUCH WORK REMAINED TO BE DONE. IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT NEITHER PRODUCERS NOR CONSUMERS HAD YET ADEQUATELY DIGESTED THE RESULTS OF THE GENEVA MEETING AND NEITHER HAD BEGUN THE PROCESS OF PLANNING FOR THE NEXT STAGE OF DISCUSSIONS. (THE UNCTAD REP TOLD U.S. DEL THAT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE WAS TENTATIVELY SET FOR THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 10 IN GENEVA SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE UNCTAD AD HOC COMMITTEE. THE BRITISH DELEGATE TOLD US THAT THE EEC WILL MEET IN BRUSSELS NEXT MONTH TO BEGIN PLANNING FOR THE NEXT PHASE AND INDICATED A STRONG INTEREST IN CLOSE AND DETAILED CONSULTATIONS AMONG MAJOR CONSUMERS PRIOR TO THE NEXT MEETING.

3. ANRPC PRODUCERS' AGREEMENT.

THE ANRPC SECGEN ANNOUNCED THAT THREE MEMBERS, MALAYSIA, INDONESIA AND SRI LANKA, HAD ALREADY RATIFIED THE ANRPC AGREEMENT AND THAT THAILAND AND SINGAPORE WERE IN THE PROCESS OF FINALIZING THEIR RATIFICATION. THE ANRPC PLANS TO MEET IN AUGUST TO PREPARE FOR THE FIRST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL. HE STATED THAT THE PRODUCERS WERE EAGER FOR AN EXPANDED PRODUCER/CONSUMER AGREEMENT UNDER UNCTAD'S AEGIS AND THAT THE PRODUCERS' SCHEME WOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CEASE TO FUNCTION SHOULD THIS BE ARRANGED. IN PRIVATE, THE MALAYSIAN REP EXPLAINED THAT THE ANRPC WOULD BEGIN BY ORGANIZING AND GATHERING A STAFF AND THAT NO MARKET OPERATIONS UNDER THE SCHEME WERE CONTEMPLATED, UNTIL THE RESULTS OF THE UNCTAD DISCUSSIONS BECAME CLEAR.

4. IRSG ROLE IN UNCTAD EXERCISE.

IRSG SECGEN BATEMAN RAISED THIS SUBJECT IN HIS CHARACTERISTICALLY CRUSTY FASHION BY REPORTING THAT IN VIEW OF THE "MINIMAL" ROLE THE IRSG HAD SO FAR PLAYED IN THE

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UNCTAD EXERCISE, HE COULD NOT JUSTIFY THE EXPENSE AND
TIME INVOLVED FOR THE SECGEN TO ATTEND THE UNCTAD
MEETINGS AS AN OBSERVER. THE U.S. AND OTHER CONSUMERS
STRONGLY DISAGREED INDICATING THAT THE SECGEN'S
ATTENDANCE WAS USEFUL AND SHOULD CONTINUE AND THAT THE
IRSG SHOULD MAINTAIN CLOSE CONTACT WITH UNCTAD AND BE
RESPONSIVE IN PROVIDING HELPFUL SUPPORT INFORMATION AND
STATISTICS. IT WAS ALSO HOPED THAT IN THE FUTURE IT
WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE GROUP TO PLAY A POSITIVE ROLE,
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ALTHOUGH NO SERIOUS ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO DEFINE WHAT THAT
ROLE MIGHT BE. THE PRODUCERS AGREED THAT THE SECGEN
SHOULD CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE UNCTAD DISCUSSIONS,
BUT WERE UNWILLING TO BE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHAT ROLE THE
GROUP MIGHT PLAY IN THE FUTURE.

5. MARITIME TRANSPORT OF RUBBER.
RAISING A PERENNIAL PROBLEM, SINGAPORE REGISTERED A
STRONG COMPLAINT BLAMING THE SHIPPING CONFERENCES FOR

THE RAPIDLY ESCALATING RUBBER FREIGHT COSTS, PARTICULARLY BETWEEN THE PRODUCING COUNTRIES AND WESTERN EUROPE. HE PROPOSED THAT THE IRSG ESTABLISH A STANDING COMMITTEE TO MONITOR FREIGHT RATES AND EXAMINE THEIR JUSTIFICATION. THIS ISSUE WAS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION.

6. HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT.

THE GROUP APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE THE TERMS OF THE MOST RECENT DRAFT AGREEMENT PROVIDED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, BUT AT THE REQUEST OF THE U.S., FINALIZATION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL AWAIT A CLEARER IDEA OF PROGRESS ON A SIMILAR AGREEMENT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL LEAD AND ZINC STUDY GROUP. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WAS EMPOWERED TO DECIDE WHEN THE GROUP WOULD SIGN, AND THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE WERE DESIGNATED WITH THE AUTHORITY TO SIGN FOR THE GROUP.

7. OTHER BUSINESS.

MALAYSIA AND JAPAN WERE ELECTED CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN RESPECTIVELY OF THE GROUP FOR 1977-78, WITH THE LIKELIHOOD THAT JAPAN WILL SUCCEED TO THE CHAIRMANSHIP IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR. THE U.S. REITERATED ITS INVITATION TO THE GROUP TO HOLD ITS 1978 ASSEMBLY IN WASHINGTON.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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